

Unitarian Society.

CHRISTIANITY, if true, must be of infinite importance; and a more essential service cannot be rendered to mankind, than to advance the interests of truth and virtue, to promote peace, liberty, and good order in society, to accelerate the improvement of the species, and to exalt the character, and secure the greatest ultimate happiness of individuals, by disseminating right principles of religion, and by exciting the attention of men to the genuine doctrines of revelation.

THIS is the chief object of THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, AND THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE, BY DISTRIBUTING *such* BOOKS as appear to the members of the society to contain the most rational views of christian doctrine, and to be most free from the errors by which the genuine truths of revelation have long been sullied and obscured. Error, voluntary or involuntary, so far as it extends, must have a pernicious influence. The members of this society think therefore, that they are doing signal service to the cause of truth and good morals, by endeavouring to clear the christian system from all foreign incumbrances, and by representing the doctrines of revelation in their primitive simplicity. Truth must ultimately be serviceable to virtue.

THE fundamental principles of this society are, that there is but ONE GOD, the SOLE Former, Supporter, and Governor of the universe, the ONLY proper object of religious

gious worship, and that there is one mediator between God and man, the MAN Christ Jesus, who was commissioned by God to instruct men in their duty, and to reveal the doctrine of a future life.

THESE truths necessarily have the most beneficial influence upon the moral conduct of men in proportion to the confidence with which they are received into the mind, and the attention with which they are regarded. And all those opinions which men have attached to this primitive system of christian doctrine, and which tend to divert their thoughts from these fundamental truths, the members of this society conceive to be injurious to the cause of religious virtue. While therefore many well-meaning persons are propagating with intemperate zeal, opinions which *they* judge to be absurd, and even impious and idolatrous, they think it their duty to lift up the standard against the farther progress of such pernicious errors, and publicly to avow their unshaken attachment to the doctrines of the UNITY of GOD, of his UNRIVALLED and UNDIVIDED authority and dominion, and that Jesus Christ, the most distinguished of the prophets, is the CREATURE and MESSENGER of God, and not his EQUAL, nor his VICEGERENT, nor CO-PARTNER with him in divine honours, as some have strangely supposed. And they are desirous to try the grand experiment, whether the cause of true religion and virtue may not be most effectually promoted upon proper unitarian principles, and whether the plain unadulterated truths of christianity, when fairly taught and inculcated, be not of themselves sufficient to form the minds of those who sincerely embrace them to that true dignity and excellence of character to which the gospel was intended to elevate them.

RATIONAL christians have hitherto been too cautious of publicly acknowledging their principles, and this disgraceful

graceful timidity hath been prejudicial to the progress of truth and virtue. It is now high time that the friends of genuine christianity should stand forth and avow themselves. The number of such, it is hoped, will be found to be much greater than many apprehend. And their example, if accompanied with, and recommended by a correspondent purity of life and morals, will naturally excite the attention of others, and produce that freedom of enquiry, that liberal discussion, and that fearless profession of principles embraced after due examination, which can be formidable to nothing but to error and vice, and which must eventually be subservient to the cause of truth and virtue, and to the best interests of mankind.

THE first general meeting of this society was held on Wednesday, February 9, 1791, when MICHAEL DODSON, Esq. being called to the chair, the following rules were read, and unanimously agreed to by the company present:

R U L E S.

I. THIS society shall be denominated THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, AND THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE, BY DISTRIBUTING BOOKS.

II. THE members of this society shall meet the second Thursday in January, April, July, and October, summonses being sent to every subscriber within the district of the penny-post; and a committee of the society shall meet on the second Thursday in every month, which committee shall consist of all those members who leave their names with
the

the secretary, to be summoned. At the general quarterly meetings *seven* shall constitute a sufficient number to proceed to business, and at the monthly committee, *three*.

III. At every quarterly meeting the minutes of the foregoing quarterly meeting, and the minutes of the intervening monthly committees, also all such letters or abstracts of them as the members attending the monthly committee shall direct to be laid before the society, shall be read : after which new members shall be admitted, all motions made at the former meeting, and which are required to be made a second time, shall be repeated and discussed, and all new motions made.

IV. THE object of the monthly committee shall be to carry into effect the resolutions of the general meetings, to superintend the printing and circulation of the books and tracts approved by the society, and to transact all such business as is not expressly reserved for the general meetings.

V. EVERY person recommended after the meeting in April 1791, by two members, shall be considered as a member of this society, upon paying his admission-fee, and subscription for the current year, or compounding for his subscription.

VI. EVERY member shall pay the sum of one guinea on his admission, and such further sum for his annual subscription, as he shall think proper ; provided the same be not less than one guinea per annum. Any person subscribing ten guineas at one time, shall be a member of this society for life, and entitled to a nomination of books, equal to that of an annual subscriber of a guinea ; and so in proportion for any larger sum. All subscriptions paid during any part of the year shall be considered as commencing from the
second

second Thursday in January in such year, and in like manner to terminate on that day twelvemonth; but no annual subscriber shall be entitled to vote at any meeting, or to receive or purchase any books or tracts of the society 'till his subscription for the current year be paid.

VII. THE society will thankfully receive any benefaction, or legacy, for the better enabling them to promote their general design.

VIII. AT each meeting of the society, a chairman shall be appointed for the meeting, who shall have a casting vote. At the meeting in January in every year, a treasurer and secretary shall be elected by ballot for the year ensuing. In case of a vacancy in either of these offices, the society shall proceed to elect a successor at the next quarterly meeting, notice of such election having been given in the previous summonses.

IX. ALL bills due to the secretary, or to any persons employed by the society, amounting to the sum of five pounds or upwards, shall be first allowed and countersigned by two members at a monthly committee, before the treasurer shall discharge them. And the treasurer's accounts shall be examined and balanced by any two members indifferently chosen, at the quarterly meeting in January in every year.

X. THE secretary shall keep a book, wherein he shall enter minutes of the proceedings and resolutions of the society at their several meetings: he shall give notice of all general meetings to the members within the district of the penny-post, and of the monthly committee, to those who leave their names for that purpose. He shall also attend to the receipt and direction of all packets and keep a regular account of the same and of the expences incurred. And
previously

previously to the general meeting in January every year, he shall apply to all the members for the payment of their subscriptions, and shall upon all occasions observe the orders and directions given by the society.

XI. EVERY book or tract, printed or in manuscript, proposed to this society, shall be recommended in writing by three members at a quarterly meeting, in the form following, viz.

“ We whose names are underwritten, being members of THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, AND THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE,
 “ do recommend a treatise entitled as a
 “ book worthy of the patronage of the society and of being
 “ printed [or purchased] and received into their catalogue;
 “ and are persuaded that it is calculated to promote the general design of the society. Dated the . . . day of
 “ ”

And its admission, and the number of copies to be printed or purchased; or its rejection, shall be determined by ballot at the next quarterly meeting, notice being given thereof in the summonses sent by the secretary, previously to such meeting. And if at any time hereafter it shall be thought proper to withdraw any book or tract from the catalogue of the society's books, the same shall be moved and seconded at one quarterly meeting, and voted by ballot at the next, notice of such measure being given in the summonses for such meeting.

XII. UPON all questions to be determined by ballot, two thirds of the members present shall be necessary to carry any proposal or question in the affirmative.

XIII. THE

XIII. THE society shall, from time to time, and as soon as conveniently may be, proceed to apportion the amount of each member's nomination of books (according to his subscription) and determine, by lot, the order or rotation in which they shall be sent. And when such order of nomination is settled, they shall direct the secretary to acquaint by letter the members whose names shall stand first in such rotation of the amount of their nomination in the following form, viz.

S I R,

" An allotment of books, amounting to the sum of
 " were on the . . instant ordered by THE UNITA-
 " RIAN SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN
 " KNOWLEDGE, AND THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE,
 " to be at your disposal, which it is expected you will
 " claim in person, or by written order to be sent to the
 " secretary, within three months, otherwise the nomina-
 " tion will lapse to the society." I am, &c.

XIV. EVERY subscriber may at any time purchase any quantity of books at the price marked in the society's catalogue, by applying to the secretary, and paying the money at the time the order is given.

XV. ALL books printed for, or purchased and distributed by the society, shall be accompanied with a label in the following form, viz. PRINTED FOR (OR DISTRIBUTED BY) THE UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRISTIAN KNOWLEDGE, AND THE PRACTICE OF VIRTUE; to be annexed at the option of the subscriber.

XVI. THE

XVI. THE carriage of the several parcels of books, (being the nominations made by the members,) and the postage of all letters sent agreeably to the rules of the society, shall be defrayed by the society.

XVII. THE rules of the society, an alphabetical list of the members, and a catalogue of their books, with the prices at which they are rated and sold, together with a general state of the society's affairs, shall be annually printed and sent to all the members.

XVIII. PROPER measures shall be used to open and to establish such a correspondence in all parts of the country as shall tend to promote the design of the society.

XIX. THE members and friends of the society will dine together at their quarterly meeting in April in every year.

XX. THE foregoing rules shall not be altered, nor any new rule made, otherwise than by the vote of two thirds of the members present at two successive quarterly meetings, to be taken by ballot.

The proper form for a BENEFACTION to
the society, by WILL.

Also, I *A. B.* do hereby give and bequeath unto
C. D. of . . . and *E. F.* of . . . the
sum of . . . to be raised and paid out
of my personal estate upon Trust that they or
either of them do pay the same to the treasurer
for the time being of a voluntary society com-
monly called or known by the name of THE
UNITARIAN SOCIETY FOR PROMOTING CHRI-
STIAN KNOWLEDGE, AND THE PRACTICE OF
VIRTUE, BY DISTRIBUTING BOOKS: the same to
be paid within months next after my de-
cease, and to be applied to the uses and pur-
poses of that society.

BENEFACTIONS and SUBSCRIPTIONS will be received by any member resident in London, and paid to

MICHAEL DODSON, Esq. Treasurer,
Boswell-court, Carey Street,

L I S T
O F
M E M B E R S.

A.

1791. R. Alderson, Esq. No. 2, Tanfield-court, Middle
Temple.
Henry Ainslie, M.D. Kendal, Westmorland.

B.

1791. Rev. Thomas Belsham, New College, Hackney.
William Belsham, Esq. Bedford.
William Blackburne, M.D. Spring Gardens.

C.

1791. Rev. Newcome Cappe, York.
Rev. Dr. Calder, Croydon, Surrey.
Mr. William Cecil Chambers, Birmingham.

D.

1791. Michael Dodson, Esq. Boswell-court, Carey Street.
Rev. Dr. Disney, Sloane Street, Knightsbridge.
Rev. Thomas Dalton, Carisbrook, Isle of Wight.

E.

1791. Rev. John Prior Estlin, Bristol

F.

1791. Mr. Friend, Jesus College, Cambridge.
Mr. William Frost, Bury, Suffolk
Rev. William Field, Warwick

G.

1791. Rev. Robert E. Garnham, jun. Bury, Suffolk.
Joshua Grigby, jun. Esq. Drinkston, near Bury,
Suffolk.

H.

1791. Thomas Brand Hollis, Esq. the Hide, near In-
gatestone, Essex.
John Hollis, Esq, High-Wycomb, Bucks.
Rev. John Hammond, Fenny-Stanton, Cambridge-
shire.
Benjamin Hobhouse, Esq. Hartham-House, near
Chippenham, Wilts.
Rev. Edward Harries, Hanwood, near Shrewsbury.
William Hunt, Esq. Birmingham.
Samuel Heywood, Esq, Harpur Street.

I.

1791. Rev. David B. Jardine, Bath.
Mr. Johnson, Bookseller, St. Paul's Church-yard
Rev. Jeremiah Joyce, Mansfield Street
Rev. Thomas Jervis, Queen's Row, Kennington.
Mrs. Jebb, Half-moon Street.

K.

1791. Rev. Dr. Kippis, Crown Street, Westminster.
Godfrey Kettle, Esq. Gower Street, Bedford-square.
Rev. Sampson Kingsford, Sturry, near Canterbury
Rev. Thomas Kerrich, Horringer, near Bury, Suf-
folk.
Rev. Timothy Kenrick, Exeter.
Rev. John Kentish, Plymouth.
Francis Kemble, Esq. Swithin's Lane.

L.

1791. Rev. Theophilus Lindsey, Essex Street, Strand,
Rev. James Lambert, Trinity College, Cambridge.
Capel Loft, Esq. Troston-Hall, near Bury, Suffolk.
Rev. George Lewis, Mare Street, Hackney.
Mr. James Lee, St. Paul's Church-yard.

M.

1791. James Martin, Esq. M.P. Downing Street.
John Moggridge, Esq. Leigh-House, near Bradford,
Wilts.
John Moggridge, jun. Esq. Bradford, Wilts.

N.

1791. Mr. Nash, Attorney at Law, Royston, Cambridge-
shire.
Mr. Notcutt, Ipswich, Suffolk.
Mrs. North, New Bridge Street.

P.

1791. Rev. Dr. Priestley, Birmingham.
Rev. Thomas Fife Palmer, Dundee, North Britain
Rev. Thomas Porter, Plymouth.

R.

1791. Mrs. Rayner, Great Titchfield Street.
Richard Reynolds, Esq. Paxton, Huntingdonshire.
William Russell, Esq. Birmingham.
Mr. Thomas Russell, Birmingham.
Rev. George Rogers, Sproughton, near Ipswich,
Suffolk.
Dr. Rodbard, Ipswich, Suffolk.
Rev. C. Rotheram, Kendal, Westmorland.
Rev. John Rowe, Shrewsbury.

S.

1791. Samuel Shore, Esq. Clapham, Surry.
Samuel Shore, jun. Esq. Norton-Hall, near Sheffield,
Yorkshire.
William Smith, Esq. M.P. Clapham.
Rev. John Simpson, Leeds, Yorkshire.
Mr. Small, Holywell, Flintshire.
John H. Stone, Esq. Hackney.
Joseph Spurrell, Esq. Friday Street, Cheapside.
Rev. Russell Scott, Portsmouth.

T.

1791. William Tayleur, Esq. Shrewsbury.
Richard G. Temple, Esq. Mortlake, Surrey.
Rev. Robert Tyrwhitt, Jesus College, Cambridge.
Isaac Thompson, Esq. Cross Street, St. Mary Hill.
John Towgood, Esq. Clement's Lane
John Tingcombe, Esq. Plymouth.
Mr. Jonathan Tingcombe, Plymouth.
Richard Thorold, Esq. Hampstead.
Rev. Joshua Toulmin, Taunton, Somersetshire.
Rev. Henry Toulmin, Chowbent, near Manchester.
Rev. William Turner, Newcastle upon Tyne.

V.

1791. William Vaughan, Esq. Mincing Lane.
Mr. Peter Valentine, in the name of the congregation of protestant dissenters, at Chowbent, near Manchester.

W.

1791. James West, Esq. Cheapside.
Robert Wainewright, jun. Esq.
Rev. J. Wiche, Maidstone, Kent.
S. W. Kent, by Mr. Lindsey.
A Well-wisher to the society, by ditto.
Robert Walpole, Esq. Beyton, near Bury, Suffolk

Y.

1791. L. Y. Suffolk, by Dr. Disney

Z.

1791. A. Z. by Mr. Lindsey.

